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AUTHOR Pinton, Giorgio A.
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ABSTRACT

Objectives, organization, and teaching strategies for adult Spanish-English bilingual education programs are discussed. It is maintained that these programs exist on a continuum; the position of a particular program on the continuum will be determined by the learning needs of the students vis-a-vis English skills on the one hand and knowledge of cultural heritage on the other. Instructional objectives are governed with regard to form by the demands of learning English, and with regard to content by adult performance level (APL) situations. In other words, the acquisition of English skills is to coincide with the development of life skills. In the organization of programs, the physical arrangement of the classroom should encourage an atmosphere that is both friendly and dynamic. Effective classroom techniques include, for ESL, a film forum and, for Spanish, discussions of highly motivational themes (e.g., Puerto Rican independence). (JB)

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ADULT BILINGUAL EDUCATION :

GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ORGANIZATION OF IT.

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by

Giorgio A. Pinton, Ph.D.

FL 011 451

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MONOPOLY USED IN ESL ADULT PROGRAMS

I

RATIONALE AND GOALS OF ADULT BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Learning is not limited to formal education. The lack of ability to work with others and make adjustments to change indicates that education should be available throughout the life span. Adult education exists to fill a definite need, and a wide-range curriculum is offered to fill this need.

Paul L. Essert reminds us that

> the educational process among adults is a distinctive educational operation; not an upper layer upon a series of graded levels of schooling, but a separate enterprise closely interwoven with the normal social responsibilities and individual life-tasks of the grown-up American. (p.316)

Therefore, adult education is no longer an indication of deficiency, but an indication of an awareness of the importance of continuous education. Who is the adult learner? He is every adult who is motivated to the extent of using the little spark of curiosity and creativity that is born within each person, that is waiting to be used and cultivated when the individual decides that he wants to use it. These adults, representing every vocational and social level, vary in age from 18 to 80 and in education from the illiterate to the graduate student.
And why? The reason for their being in continuing education are as varied as the adult themselves.

The adults of which we intend to speak, may be classified in any one or more of the following groups:

1. illiterates of Hispanic descent, willing to learn ESL;

2. literates of Hispanic descent, willing to learn ESL;

3. literates and illiterates of Hispanic descent willing to enrich the knowledge of their cultural and historical heritage.

ESL components of Bilingual Education permeate the curriculum for the first two group (1.,2.); Spanish may predominantly be used for the curriculum of the third group (3.). The curricular goals for the above groups may be summarized by the authors of the BOLETIN DE ORIENTACION/PROGRAMA DE EDUCACION BASICA PARA ADULTOS (Departamento de Instruccion Publica, Puerto Rico):

> La educacion del individuo es uno de los factores determinantes en la habilidad que este pueda tener para hacer frente a los

> problemas sociales, economicos, politicos, y de otra indole que se le presentan en la vida. Esta' comprobado que la falta de preparacion academica limita las oportunidades de exito del individuo y ocasiona en una u otra forma el desempleo, la pobreza y la delincuencia. (p.1)

The same authors expand the same ideals for the acquisition of ESL, as follows:

> La ensenanza de ingles en Puerto Rico ha sido tema bastante discutido en el desarrollo historico de nuestro pueblo. No-obstante las consideraciones en favor o en contra de este asunto, la necesidad de aprender ingles en Puerto Rico es obvia. Nuestras relaciones politicas, sociales y economicas con los Estados Unidos de Norte America nos imponen la necesidad imperiosa de adquirir un conocimiento basico del idioma ingles.
>
> Las oportunidades de empleo en fabricas, restaurantes, hoteles, supermercados, tiendas, salones de belleza y de barberia, talleres, escuelas, lineas aereas y navieras, radio y television, etc. son mayores y mejores para el ciudadano que ademas de poseer las destrezas requeridas para el empleo, maneja con cierta facilidad las destrezas elementales del ingles.(...) (p.115)

But even more, apropos for our case:

> Muchos de los estudiantes adultos emigran al "norte" y su adaptacion a aquel ambiente depende grandemente de su efectividad en la comunicacion, particularmente en ingles. (ibidem, p.115)

This is clarified by Peggy Rodriguez in her A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR TEACHING SURVIVAL ENGLISH (Lafep, Gary, Indiana):

> Try to imagine yourself in the situation of an average Latin American adult immigrant or migrant worker. Most immigrants arrive with more worries than resources. Many are unskilled workers. Others are agricultural workers whose skills are literally worthless in an alien urban environment. Their native language is of little practical value, and the norms for social behavior which are second nature to them in their native land don't apply in the new society. As foreigner and also as members of a minority group, they are often discriminated against and frequently taken advantage of. Men and women, confident and proud in their homeland, feel helpless and have difficulty maintaining their self-esteem in an unfamiliar setting. (p. 11)

In short,

THE BEHAVIORAL GOALS

FOR AN ADULT BILINGUAL PROGRAM ARE:

1.

LEARNING to UNDERSTAND ESL (50% of time)
SPEAK ESL
READ ESL
WRITE ESL

2.

LEARNING about the CULTURE (25% of time)
HISTORY
VALUES
SOCIAL CUSTOMS
of the English
Society.

3.

LEARNING more about (25% of time)
the CULTURE
HISTORY
VALUES
SOCIAL CUSTOMS
of their
homeland.

II

CURRICULUM AND BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES OF AN A.Bil.E.

Within the frame of the established general BEHAVIORAL GOALS, we should formulate those BEHAVIORAL SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES that help the non-English speaking person function in an English-speaking community.

The material used should therefore present to the student a possibility of learning ESL and at the same time assimilate the necessary information about the English community in order to be able to function within it. Thus, we have a two levels curriculum:

A. the structural:

The student is supposed to learn the essential structures of the ESL, especially all those structures that present a conflict or contrast with the native language of the learner;

an already prepared curriculum in this area is offered by the Los Angeles School District: ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: A NEW APPROACH FOR THE 21st CENTURY.

B. the situational:

The student is supposed to learn the essential situations and be capable to behave in such situations in a functionally competent manner, as suggested by the APL Model;

APL instructional modules cover the following main objectives:

* consumer economics
* occupational knowledge
* health
* community resources
* government and law

Thus, while the form of our curriculum is offered by the ESL structures, its content is provided by the APL situations. In this way authentic situations provide the framework for the sequential presentation of the structural elements of the lessons. (cfr. again the work referred to above).
A very well known illustration is the following:

skills	READING	WRITING	SPEAKING/ LISTENING	COMPUTATION	PROBLEM SOLVING	INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS
objectives CONSUMER ECONOMICS	reading a newspaper grocery ad	writing a grocery list	listening to an advertise ment on the radio	computing the unit price of a grocery item.	determ- ining the best store where to shop.	interacting with sales clerk in a successful way.

This type of performance requirements can be specified for every one of the other APL main objectives.

When the adult student enter a classroom to study English, it is probably after a hard day at work, or, worse still, after looking for work. Their first experiences with English have undoubtedly been frustrating and unsuccessful. They may have little educational background or perhaps suffer negative associations attached to formal schooling.

For these reasons, the ESL teacher must prepare specific objectives that not only will drill the student in ESL but also in APL functional competency. The medium is ESL, but the message is APL.

An excellent guide for this type of curriculum is the material published by the LATIN AMERICAN FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAM, INC.(Gary, Indiana): their 3 levels of INGLES PARA SOBREVIVIR (beginning, intermediate, advanced) together with the SURVIVAL GUIDE do exactly this: they combine ESL with APL.

Example: Responding to a Job Ad (Ingles Para Sobrevivir, I -pp.54ff)

Objective: student is able to respond to a job ad by telephone.

Dialogue :

* Hello, may I help you?
** This is Luis Sanchez; I want to ask you about the job in the newspaper.
* What do you want to know?
** What are the hours?
* You work from 8 to 5.
** How much does it pay?
* It pays $2.80 an hour.
** May I come and apply?
* Yes, You may come now.

Grammatical Focus: etc.

Example: Responding to newspaper ads (Survival Guide, -pp.101ff)

Objectives: The student is able to read and respond to classified ads.
The student is able to discuss the price per unit of the same products in two different ads.

Vocabulary: ad, coupon, job, etc.

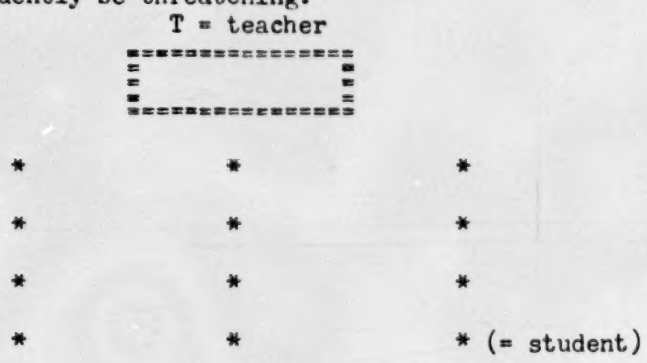
Specific skills: the student
can name at least three types of classifications of ads
can relate how he would put an ad in the paper
can respond to an ad by phone
understands want-ad vocabulary
etc.

III

ORGANIZATION OF ADULT BILINGUAL ED.PROGRAMS

There is no doubt that what is good organization (traditional, grouping, open classroom, teaming) for youngsters may not be so good for adults. It may be advisable to plan intentionally something else.

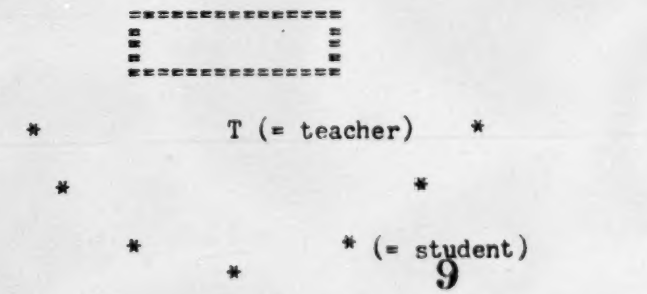
The Physical Distribution of the classroom has importance. Spatial relationships can tangibly influence the development of social relationships. In the traditional classroom students sit in rows of stationary desks. Each student faces the front of the classroom, where the teacher sits or stands behind a large desk. The distance as well as the obstacle between teacher and class clearly state to all involved that the teacher is an authority figure. The students interact exclusively with the teacher, the only person they face. Teacher approval assumes unreasonable importance and the atmosphere can consequently be threatening.



We should create a room that is both friendly and dynamic - a room to which students will be anxious to return. The desks may be arranged in a semi-circle; each class period it is suggested by the experts that we make the circle a little bit smaller so that knees are eventually almost touching. Gradually reducing the physical distance one may hope to reduce the psychological distance.

All the students can now see and converse with one another as well as with the teacher. It won't take them long to become friendly, especially with the teacher's encouragement. Move the teacher desk to another part of the room so that it doesn't stand between you and the class.

The mood evoked by this new environment is positive and potentially supportive. Students and teacher alike are members of a single group involved in a common endeavor. The role of the teacher is to furnish information, guidance and reinforcement.



The teaching area is the space in front of, inside of the semi-circle, and even outside it. Make use of the entire area by walking around and when appropriate, gesturing and dramatizing.

If the individual attention is required, the semi-circle will allow the teacher to get closer to any one of the students. When students are conversing freely among themselves, then the teacher may remain outside the circle as a casual observer, minimizing his presence.

Our is purely an example. Other arrangements are also possible: what is important is to create an atmosphere that allows the flux of learning to go on in the target language.

Peggy Rodriguez (op.cit., p. 45) suggests a set of hand movements that she found effective in drill situation.

Dramatization may be a strategy but it is certainly part of organization, too. Not all teachers can do it, but all students always adore it. This specific acting out situations can help a lot to make the drill practice much more interesting and challenging. ESL adult learners, according to my own observations, seem to enjoy the dramatizing process. Their difficulty in comprehending and memorizing is highly reduced. Verbal behavior, speech behavior can be reinforced greatly if coordinated with body or physical behavior that acts out the meaning of what is spoken.

(Cfr. chapter on "Adult Development and Learning" in
Alan B. Knox, ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING - Jossey Bass Publ., Calif, 1977, at pp.548ff)

IV.

STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ADULT BILINGUAL EDUC.

In "Methods and Materials for Adult Learners," Neff (in Administration of Continuing Education, Washington, D.C., 1969) says:

> Methods of instruction are necessarily limited by administrative organization - historically, class unit administration has duplicated class patterns of the American elementary and secondary school, thereby locking curriculum and methods into traditional patterns. Accordingly, there is an urgent need for innovative scheduling approaches to encourage use of methods and techniques leading to individualization of instruction. Methods must be based on the objectives of the program planners, instructors, and enrolled adults to ensure utilization of the best method for the specific content areas and course objectives. (p .362)

Thus, the author lists the following approved strategies for the teaching to adults, trying to give proves of their usefulness in such setting:

a. discussion and lecture

b. buzz groups

c. forum

d. debate

e. panel

f. symposium

g. brainstorming

h. circular response

i. demonstration

In my own ESL/Bilingual programs I have tried some of these methods:

1. in ESL : film forum = by discussing the meaning of a film after specific sequences, in order to check comprehension.
   brainstorming = that failed in the target language.
   circular response = allows some preparation before one's turn comes up again.

2. in SP. : debate on specific themes of great motivational content: P.R.'s independence, statehood;
brainstorming;
discussion and lecture=generally, by keeping the presentation very short, there is more time for discussion.

It is evident that the above methods cannot substitute the drill practice, which is the only known method for learning the essential structures of the target language. Repetition, substitution drills, etc. are the continuing and persistent way of learning ESL; the above strategies are purely motivational strategies, to give confidence to the learner. As it is natural, these methods are good in the native language of the learners and much less in the second language. They would be of help for students who already have reached the intermediate or even better the advanced level in ESL acquisition and habits.

Very successful I found the use of games (Monopoly, Chess, Mind Power) when they are adapted for our own goals of using the second language or learning a specific other behavior. In this case, if used for ESL programs, games should have a built-in structure that motivate the players to use the target language. (see Appendix I)

Given the fact that the learners are adults, there is no need of a strong maintenance program of the native language, unless the learner is illiterate, in which case he would be introduce to the third and four goals of learning a language (second or native).

In any case, some strategies are necessary in order to motivate the adult learner and overcome his easy discouragements.

The most important strategy in working with adults remains the following: "Adults will be responsive to instruction, provided that they are treated with the utmost courtesy and respect, with praise for every achievement, and with no reproaches. Adults can disciplines themselves to stick to a job and to work hard at it, if they see results." (see Lillie Pope, Guidelines to Teaching Remedial Reading, Book Lab. Brooklyn, NY, 1975, page 38).